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SUBJECT: Guo Feixiong's Trial and Current Status

11. (U) Classified by Consul General Robert Goldberg for reason 1.4 (d).

12. (C) SUMMARY AND COMMENT: Democracy activist Guo Feixiong stood trial July 9 on charges of "illegal business activity," but the content and nature of the proceedings belied the political character of his prosecution. Guo remains imprisoned in Guangzhou, awaiting sentencing. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT

13. (C) Guo Feixiong's wife, Zhang Qing, and democracy activist Tang Jingling on July 12 and 13, respectively, discussed the July 9 trial and current situation of Guo Feixiong with Congen Poloff.

The Trial

14. (C) Zhang noted that on the day of the trial the Tianhe District Court had erected a new security screening station on the fourth floor of the courthouse where Guo's courtroom was located. There had been no such station when Zhang visited three days earlier.

15. (C) Post had secured permission to attend Guo's original trial date of June 15, but the trial was subsequently postponed. When the new trial date of July 9 was announced, post once again requested permission to attend, but was refused. Zhang requested ten seats at the trial, but was only allocated two: one for her, and one for Guo's elder brother. Though a total of about nineteen people observed the trial, Zhang suspected the others to be from public security organs or the courts. She noticed at least six of them fell asleep during the proceedings.

16. (C) During the hearing, Guo complained about his mistreatment in prison, and claimed that his trial was a political persecution. Though he was charged with the crime of "illegal business activity," approximately ninety percent of the court's questions pertained to his involvement in the Taishi village incident. To protest the proceedings, Guo answered only his lawyer's questions, refusing to respond to questions by the procurator or the judge. Guo's plan to read a ten-page, handwritten, statement to the court was denied by the judge, who ruled that Guo's statement did not relate to his actual charges. (The statement outlined abuses suffered in prison and his argument against the legitimacy of the proceedings.) The court did not indicate when a sentence would be announced.

Current Conditions

17. (C) Zhang said Guo appeared moderately healthy at the time of his trial. Neither she nor others are currently permitted to visit Guo, who is incarcerated in Guangzhou. Both Zhang and Tang said Guo hoped his situation would attract international attention and support for China's democracy movement. Tang noted that the authorities had pressured Zhang and other members of Guo's family to convince Guo to confess to the charges against him. Tang stated that Zhang and Guo's other relatives support Guo for family reasons, and are not members of the democracy movement.

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